

METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR A READILY OPENED AND CLOSED, ROLL UP CONTAINER

Technical field

5 This invention relates to roll up containers, which can be readily opened and closed.

Background Art

10 Today there are a wide assortment of carrying containers, all of them share some problems. Most people entering sporting arenas, mass transportation stations and embarking on air travel, face the requirement to open their carrying containers for security and/or customs inspections. The time it takes to thoroughly open and show these officials the container contents affects not only the person carrying the container, but also those behind the person in queue, as well as the mood of the officials involved. For these
15 reasons, it is advantageous for carrying containers to support being readily opened for inspection to show all contents, and then readily closed before leaving the inspection area.

Summary of the invention

20 The invention includes a roll formed of a piece of material which can be rolled up to securely, and conveniently, carry items into a venue, such as a stadium, arena, or into any event that would require a possible search of items being brought into it. The roll can be opened, inspected, and closed, in a matter of seconds.

 Certain other preferred embodiments may further provide drawstrings to controllably close each end when the invention is rolled up.

25 Certain preferred embodiments can further provide a cushion for sitting.

The invention includes using a container made of a piece of material with at least one see-through pocket on a first side. The container further includes fastening strips onto a first side and second, opposing side. The use includes the following.

- 5 • Placing at least one object on the first side of the material piece in the see-through pocket.
- Closing the material piece to create the container with the placed object by attaching the fastening strips of the first side and the second side to each other.
- Releasing the attached fastening strips to rapidly open the container.

The fastening strips may preferably be a hook and loop type fastener.

10 The invention also includes a method of doing business, including the following steps.

- A merchant providing the container to a customer, via a concession site, to create a first revenue from the customer
- The concession site promoting the container to the customer.
- 15 • A concession site provider hosting a concession site to create a site revenue from the merchant; wherein the site revenue from the merchant is based at least partly upon the expectation of creating the first revenue for the merchant.

The invention further includes the first revenue and the site revenue as products of the process of doing business.

20 The concession site may be any of the following: a venue concession site, a transportation concession site, a marketplace concession site, and a concession web site.

These and other advantages of the present invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed descriptions and studying the various figures of the drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure **1A** shows a view of first side of a first example of a roll fabricated in accord with the invention, in an unfurled position;

5 Figure **1B** illustrates a second side of Figure **1A** illustrating the outside view of the roll;

Figure **2A** shows what the roll looks like while in use;

Figure **2B** shows a view of first side of the inside view of a second example embodiment in the unfurled position, which is a refinement of Figure **1A**;

10 Figure **3A** shows the second side, which is the outside view of the embodiment of Figure **2B**, and a refinement of Figure **1B**;

Figure **3B** shows what the invention illustrated in Figures **2B** and **3A** looks like while in use;

Figure **4A** shows a view of a first side of the inside view of a third example embodiment in the unfurled position, as a refinement of Figure **1A**;

15 Figure **4B** shows the second side, which is the outside view of the third example embodiment, which is a refinement of Figure **1B**;

Figure **5** shows an alternative embodiment of the second side as shown in Figures **1B**, **3A**, and **4B**; and

20 Figure **6** shows a business method providing containers to generate revenue for a merchant, and for a concession site provider.

Detailed Description of the Invention

The invention includes an embodiment, which is a piece of material which can be rolled up to securely, and conveniently, carry items into a venue, such as a stadium, arena, or into any event that would require a possible search of items being brought into
5 it. The roll can be opened, inspected, and closed, in a matter of seconds. In some embodiments a opening may be formed in the material to allow the user's head to pass through the opening so that the material also me used as a poncho. The opening may be resealable using known fastening means including but not limited to a zipper, snaps, buttons, or hook and loop fastener.

10 Figure **1A** shows a view of the first side of a roll **200** built in accord with the invention, which is an inside view in an unfurled position.

Number **10** is a piece of material, which can be of cotton cloth canvas, nylon canvas, heavy plastic, leather, nylon, or other useable material. The material may also provide insulation, keeping the contents hot or cold.

15 Numbers **20** and **30** are see-through pockets, which are sewn into material **10**. The pockets may be on either side of the material **10**. The pockets **20** and **30** may hold tickets, keys, money, wallet, peanuts, a sandwich, and so on. Essentially anything that will fit inside it will be identifiable by a security official without the need to remove it from the see-through pocket. The see-through pockets may be made of at least any of the
20 following: see-through mesh, clear plastic, and see-through fabric. See through pockets may be attached anywhere on the first side. The pockets **20** and **30** may have means for closing the pockets to prevent items from falling out, including but not limited to buttons, zippers, and hook and loop type fasteners.

The invention is used by placing at least one object **160** on the first side of the
25 material piece in a see-through pocket **30**.

In some embodiments, it may be possible to fold the material of the invention into one of the pockets sewn onto the material.

Numbers **40**, **42**, and **44** are fastener pieces, preferably a hook and loop type fastener, used to allow easy opening of the roll and to secure the ends when closed. There may be two or more fastener pieces. The position and relative length and width of the fastener pieces may vary from what is shown in the Figures. In other embodiments
5 other known fasteners may be used including but not limited to buttons and snaps.

Belt **50** is used for securing and carrying the Roll. Belt **50** is preferably primarily composed of NYLONTM, leather, and/or webbing. The belt **50** may preferably be wide enough, and made of a material optimized for placing buttons or logos. Such belts **50** further support the business of attaching logos to the container **200**.

10 Number **60** is a plastic or metal belt loop anchor for tightening the loop of belt **50** around the rolled items and to allow belt **50** to act as a carrier for carrying the roll over one's shoulder.

Figure **1B** shows a second side of material piece **10** of Figure **1A** illustrating the outside view of the roll **200**.

15 Figure **1B** shows a cut-away of the contents of see-through pocket **30**, including the placed object **160**, of Figure **1A**. The see-through pocket **20** is also shown in outline, with a different shape than the corresponding see-through pocket **20** of Figure **1A**.

Numbers **80**, **82**, and **84** are fastener strips, preferably strips of a hook and loop type fastener. They are preferably compatible with strips **40**, **42**, and **44**, and are
20 preferably longer in length than their counterparts **40**, **42**, and **44** on first side, to accommodate for various sizes of loads. These strips may also be preferably hook or loop strips, compatible respectively with the opposing loop or hook strips **40**, **42**, and **44** on first side.

Belt **50** is preferably attached into the center of the material **10** for balance when
25 being carried. Belt **50** may be attached by adhesives and/or stitching.

Number **70** refers to a loop (which may be comprised of any material including metal or plastic) attached to an end of the belt **50**, which is attached to material **10**. The belt **50** is looped through the loop **70** once items are rolled into the roll.

Number **90** may alternatively be a belt type handle for carrying the roll in one's hand, as opposed to carrying it over one's shoulder, or a guide for holding belt **50** centered on the roll. Numbers **100** and **102** are prominent spaces, to which a logo can be applied. This is useful in providing targets for merchants to attach logos to the container to further generate revenue from customers.

Figure **2A** shows what the roll **200** looks like while in use.

10 The invention includes a second example embodiment, which further includes at least one drawstring on a side, used to close that end.

Figure **2B** shows a view of the first side of the second embodiment in the unfurled position, which is a refinement of Figure **1A**. The see-through pocket **20** of the previous Figures may have openings on the first side and/or the opposing, second side as shown in this Figure. The contents of the see-through pocket **30** is represented by an object **160**, placing in that pocket as in Figure **1A**.

Figure **3A** shows the second side, which is the outside view of the embodiment of Figure **2B**, and is also a refinement of Figure **1B**.

Figure **3B** shows what the invention illustrated in Figures **2B** and **3A** looks like while in use.

In Figures **2B** and **3A**, numbers **110** and **112** on either side of the material **10** refer to small material tubes, in which drawstrings **130** and **132**, respectively reside. Numbers **120** and **122** are the slide locks for the drawstrings **130** and **132** for keeping the ends taught, when the roll is closed, as shown in Figure **3B**. Numbers **140** and **142** are the sewn or otherwise anchored ends of the drawstrings **130** and **132**. This is preferably the only place where the drawstrings are attached to the material.

When one or both of the drawstrings **120** and/or **122** are pulled tight, the ends of the roll close, much like a drawstring on sweatshirt hood. The small slide locks **120** and **122** hold the ends closed.

The invention includes another example embodiment which, in addition to being a storage device for carrying items, can also double as a cushion for sitting.

Figure **4A** shows a view of the first side of this embodiment in the unfurled position, as a refinement of Figure **1A**.

Figure **4B** shows the second side, which is the outside view of the roll, which is a refinement of Figure **1B**.

Number **150**, in Figures **4A** and **4B**, refers to the cushion portion of roll. This portion **150** of the roll can be made of a compressible material, sandwiched in between two layers of material or filled with air under pressure. The compressible may be one of a number of acceptable materials including but not limited to foam materials.

A further preferred embodiment includes the following. Number **160** refers to an air valve used to get air into the cushion portion **150**. Number **160** can be either a typical air valve where one can manually blow air into the chamber. Alternatively an induction air valve **160** may be used to suck air into the chamber, while the roll is being opened up and the air valve is held open.

Figure **5** shows an alternative embodiment of the second side as shown in Figures **1B**, **3A**, and **4B**, with longer fastening regions **80-84**, and without logo regions **100** and **102**. The sewing of pockets **20** and **30** is visible, as is stitching about the perimeter of the material piece **10**. Hinge **70** is shown rounded, rather than rectangular, as in the previous Figures.

Figure **6** shows a business method providing containers **200** to generate revenue **800** for a merchant **700**, and revenue **800** for a concession site provider **710** hosting **712** the concession site **500** by which a customer **600** is provided the container **200**.

The concession site **500** of Figure **6** may include any of the following: a venue concession site, a transportation concession site, a marketplace concession site, and a concession web site.

- The venue concession site may be a stadium concession site, a theater concession site,
5 and an arena concession site.
- The transportation concession site is may be a bus station concession site, a train station concession site, an airport concession site, a ferry terminal concession site, a ferry concession site, a train concession site, and an airplane concession site.
- The airplane concession site may be embodied as written material to the customer.
- 10 • The marketplace concession site may be a farmers market concession site, a flea market concession site, an open air market concession site, a merchant's collective concession site, and a commission based retail concession site.

Figure **6** also shows a second merchant **720** servicing **722** the container to create at least one logo **220** on the container **200** for the customer **600**, to create a second
15 revenue **820** from **822** the customer **600** to **824** the second merchant **720**. The invention also includes the second revenue **820** as a product of this business process.

The second merchant **720** may use **724** a second concession site **520** to provide **722** the logo **220** on the container **200**.

In Figure **6**, the concession site provider **710** may host **522** the second concession
20 site **520** to receive **822** a second site revenue **820** from **726** the second merchant **720**. The second site revenue **520** is based at least partly upon the expectation of creating the second revenue **820** by the second merchant **720**.

In certain preferred embodiments, the first merchant **700** may be essentially the second merchant **720**.

25 The preceding embodiments have been provided by way of example and are not meant to constrain the scope of the following claims.